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## SKETCHES OF SOCIETY.

### POPULAR SUPERSTITIONS OF THE WELSH.\*

#### *To the EDITOR of the CAMBRO-BRITON.*

SIR,—Agreeably with a promise, made at the conclusion of my former communication on this subject, inserted in the ninth Number of the CAMBRO-BRITON†, I proceed to transcribe from Mr. Jones's entertaining and singular work some of the tales, with which he illustrates the actions and qualities of the different sorts of spirits. He has classed them under different heads, and the first, which I copy, are those relating to

#### GHOSTS, GOBLINS, DEMONS, &c.

A Mr. Henry Llewelyn, having been sent to Samuel Davies, of Ystrad Defodoc parish, in Glamorganshire, to fetch a load of books, viz. Bibles, Testaments, Watts's Psalms, Hymns, and Songs for Children, said, coming home by night towards Mynyddustwyn, having just passed by Clwyd yr Helygen ale-house‡, and being in a dry fair part of the lane, the mare, which he rode, stood still, and, like the ass of the ungodly Balaam, would go no farther, but kept drawing back. Presently he could see a living thing, round like a bowl, rolling from the right hand to the left, and crossing the lane, moving sometimes slow and sometimes very swift,—yea, swifter than a bird could fly, though it had neither wings nor feet,—altering also its size. It appeared three times, less one time than another, seemed least when near him, and appeared to roll towards the mare's belly. The mare would then want to go forward, but he stopped her, to see more carefully what manner of thing it was. He staid, as he thought, about three minutes, to look at it; but, fearing to see a worse sight, he thought it high time to speak to it, and said,—“What seekest

not absolutely essential to its interest, as well as for other reasons, which need not be explained.

\* The “Superstitions,” recorded in this article, if authentic, are not very creditable to the intelligence of our lower classes in Wales:—but it is some satisfaction to think, that none of them are of recent date.—Ed.

† Vol. i. p. 349.

‡ Near Clwyd yr Helygen, in times past, and near the place where the apparition was seen, the Lord's day was greatly profaned. It may be also, that the adversary was wroth at the good books, and the bringer of them; for he well knew what burden the mare carried.

“thou, thou foul thing? In the name of the Lord Jesus, go away!” And by speaking this it vanished, and sunk into the ground near the mare’s feet. It appeared to be of a *reddish ash colour*.

The Rev. Mr. Thomas Baddy, who lived in Denbigh town, and was a dissenting minister in that place, went into his study one night, and, while he was reading or writing, he heard some one behind him laughing and grinning at him, which made him stop a little,—as well indeed it might. It came again, and then he wrote, on a piece of paper, that devil-wounding scripture, 1st John, 3d,—“For this was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the Devil,”—and held it backwards from him, when the laughing ceased for ever: for it was a melancholy word to a scoffing devil, and enough to damp him. It would have damped him yet more, if he had shewn him James 2, 19—“The devils believe and tremble.” But he had enough for one time.

Mary M——, living near Crumlin Bridge, and standing on the bridge one evening, heard a weak voice, like that of a person in distress, going up the river, saying,—“O Duw pa beth y wnaif fi —O Duw pa beth y wnaif fi\*?” At first she thought it was a human voice of one in distress; but, while she *was considering to think* what the voice was like, a great terror seized her suddenly, so that she thought her hair moved, and she could neither stir backward or forward from the place where she stood; but, seeing her cousin standing in the yard belonging to the house near the bridge, she with great difficulty called unto her, who had also heard the lamentable voice,—and she came to her. When Mary M. reached the house she fainted. The voice, which she heard, was most probably that of some disembodied spirit, who had lived and died in sin, and felt the wrath of God for it: which will make all impenitent sinners cry at last.

#### GYPSIES AND WITCHES.

ONCE on a time two gypsies came to the house of Lewis Thomas of Llanharan, in Glamorganshire, when he was not at home, and, seeing his wife by herself, began to be bold and very importunate for this and that, which they wanted; but she, having a disliking to these sort of people, commanded them to be gone,

\* O God, what shall I do? O God, what shall I do?